

“ A TRUE / FAST STORY OF MY ROAD TRIP TO MICROSOFT ”

Or,

“ THE BIRTH OF A HIGH TECH START-UP COMPANY CANCELED
BY A RAGING ICE STORM ”

By Robert L. Sanders

A long time ago

I was a top executive at a real estate firm who, while earning mucho bucks, was only happy and excited through the prospects of my getting a new high tech invention to the point of mass marketing and worldwide distribution. I'd taken thousands and thousands of dollars earned from my real estate sales commissions and had personally designed and manufactured a very sharp contemporary looking new line of fashionable jackets that had components of electronic wireless cellular telephones sewn inside them. I truly was one of the innovators at the time who was racing to patent a claim based on interfacing with wireless telecommunication satellites orbiting high up in space so my cell phone mini equipment built into high tech jacket customers would be able to make wireless hands free phone calls from cool looking jackets they would wear wherever they would go. I had even typed into my Business Plan a provision that had me starting my own telephone company! I would be a service carrier. After all, the jacket was the telephone. I would sell the high tech jackets, purchase air time in bulk, have my jacket customers sign phone service contracts, and send monthly billing statements out charging for calls and texts they would be making. –At better than low prices. After the completion of making a super cool looking line of prototypes in all sizes, men's, women, and children, I bought the best mannequins money would buy and dressed them with “The Coolest Jackets on the Planet”, which was the catch phrase I was using to promote the prototypes through the company I'd incorporated utilizing my officially trademarked business name: “YO COOL JACKET” ®. Yep, secured my circled R from Washington, D.C. and everything. I still to this day have the trademark certificate provided by the Patent & Trademark Office. Needing venture capital, I asked myself who in this world would relate and understand in a big way what I was going through in attempting to launch these futuristic original prototypes of high tech gadget jackets. Who would have the funds to see that my “YO COOL JACKET ® COMPANY would not only take off, but, rather, skyrocket to tremendous success! Hey, I was with a bunch of cool looking jackets that could get the wearer communicating globally by way of wireless cellular capabilities as she or he only had to slam the spring loaded keys on the keypad built into the sleeve of the jacket to make the phone call. What fun! We could even graduate to *voice activation* for dialing phone numbers. Easily! The technical web stuff these jackets could be designed to do for the hip wearer was almost endless. My work studio itself could have been a world class fine art museum installation, man. No sweat. Truly. As for that venture capital I needed, I immediately thought of Mr. Bill Gates and MICROSOFT CORPORATION. I had read the fascinating story of his early development of computers for the world at large and I'd felt he was the dude to see. He would get what I was doing. When I called the MICROSOFT campus in , Redmond, Washington, I secured an appointment with an executive in the New Product Development Department. She wanted to see my strange high tech jackets. I was very happy. Actually, I was thrilled and jumping out of my

skin! I had left all daily real estate responsibilities to my secretary, Sheridan, I packed all the newly minted Yo Cool Jackets(R) along with the mannequins into my car and took to the road to MICROSOFT. I was departing from Danville, California, making a bee-line to Redmond, Washington, a 12 hour drive. Who cared that the drive was a long one? All I could do was dream about the end result of having MICROSOFT joint venture with me to the point where I was very, very wealthy... and, yes, very, very proud. I really was so elated. And it felt so good. My brain synapses activity gloriously caused a sort of fireworks in the night sky show in my head that exceeding any I'd ever experienced on any fourth of July. I was simply positive about everything. I was aware that nobody anywhere on the whole planet up to this point in time had ever seen anything quite like my line of High Tech Jackets. Not ever! People who were lucky enough to see and experience my prototypes would say things like: "Wow, how very double-o-seven!" -And nobody doesn't like 007. Anyway, during the long drive, in my mind, I had taken the whole idea of wireless hands free cell phone calling from cool jackets (speaker & mini microphones in one tiny unit situated in the jackets collar) further. Because in my mind, "Bill" had said: "Bobby, baby, let's also sew in mini-camera lenses. A digital camera lens for the front of the jackets and a lens peeping out of the back of the Yo Cool Jackets (R). We'll just design them in so they look cool. It'll be great. This way the fantastic new to the world Yo Cool Jackets(R) can have surveillance transmitted 24/7 to the jacket customer's home if desired. They can keep a record of all they encounter, even unknowingly, if ever they need to refer to the imagery. This will give people a better sense of safety in an increasingly dangerous world. Ain't nobody gonna mess with somebody wearing a Yo Cool Jacket(R). A perpetrator's face would be clearly on camera, dude. Hey!" Perhaps we should have a jacket model called - "Crime Fighter". I was a couple hours outside the state of Washington. Highway US 5. I thought, yeah, man, I'll get a room and stay the night at the hotel Bill Gates stayed in when he was cutting the first important business deals with all those guys in that coffee shop I'd read about... I forget the name of the hotel at this writing. But that had to be the hotel I would stay in. My staying there would contribute to the good karma of everything, right? In all the day dreaming I was doing, in all the fantasy spinning I was enjoying, I had hardly noticed or cared at all about the winter storm that was upon me while I was driving. But, I was indeed keenly aware that I was continually reducing my car's speed due to a lot of ice and snow that was swirling around. I think I even said out loud to myself words to the effect of "Whoa, all those stories about all those mean ol' winter storms of freezing ice and snow that hit the good folks up in the great northern state of Washington are so very true. By the time I got to the hotel ... darn, I wish I could remember the name of that place. It got to be so famous because of the colorful role it played in so many early Microsoft deals...anyway, by the time I got to the hotel parking lot I was literally crawling. The ice on the roads was so foreboding. And it was such a dark night. I mean it. I was driving less than 5 miles an hour. And still I was perilously slipping and sliding. I parked the car. I got a room. Back and forth from the hotel to the car, I schlepped all the jacket prototypes plus the cumbersome mannequins up to the room storm or no storm. This was only because obsessive compulsive me could not leave anything in the car overnight and risk some imaginary mumzer stealing my precious cargo. For that would put me out of business and deprive humanity of "The Coolest Jackets on the Planet". The looks on the faces of the hotel staff as I trundled through the hotel lobby with those mannequins were hilarious. Okay. All was done. I'm in the hotel room for the night. I'd set out my Oscar de la Renta killer business suit and tie for what would have been one of the most important business meetings of my life and I hit the hay. When I awoke, all very excited about my 11:AM meeting with who simply had to

have been Bill Gates' trusty right hand person, I got dressed, checked myself out in the mirror, smiled, and pulled the curtain. I looked out of the window to monitor the weather. Nothing was swirling around anymore. Everything was calm. No storm. But, holy goodness gracious and look out, mamma! Jack Frost was king of the mountain for sure on that day! I'd never seen anything like it. There were icicles on icicles and snow drifts on top of snow drifts. I had finally witnessed what they call a winter wonderland. Good. I was thinking, all the more added to this whole magical trip to MICROSOFT CORPORATION. I moved on. I was lucky. The engine of the car started and the car was just fine. I made my way, slowly, to MICORSOFT. I was thinking what a milestone in a person's life, man. My dream of successfully bringing the high tech jackets to market was going to evolve and I was staying positive about everything. When I reached the bundled up security guard at his gate station at the entrance to the MICROSOFT campus, my heart had sunk. Just a few little words from him and my heart sunk like a, like a, ... I don't know what. But whatever it was, it turned my happiness into the dismal blues. When I had given my name to the guard and told him I had an appointment, he said: "Well, I see I do have you scheduled for a meeting this morning. Only nobody's comin' in today. The ice storm has everyone at home. it's too dangerous. People around here don't drive when the roads get dangerous. And another big storm's suppose to hit us today. I'm sorry, son. Nobody's here." He let me in anyway. I had told him I would appreciate my at least waiting for a while just in case a brave soul or someone like me who doesn't let anything get in the way of business progress shows up. I got to the building I was scheduled to visit and I waited. Yes, ambitious, childish fool that I was, I waited nearly 4 hours going out of my skull because of the disappointment the mishap was causing. Then, I got in my car, drove off, waved to the gate guard and returned to my hotel. Furiously, I re-schlepped the entire shooting match up to my room and set up a veritable 8th Avenue New York fashion showroom that would have made any one working at PRADA proud. I had the coolest jackets on the planet mounted on the world's most expensive mannequins ready for anyone at MICROSOFT I could hustle on over to the hotel in the next 24 hours. But, I was running out of money and I knew I hadn't much time before I would have to bring my room key to the hotel desk and check out. So, I wasted no time. I got right to it and I hit the phones. I left messages on more voicemail systems than the best salesperson anywhere. An awful lot of people got invitations to my make-shift showroom. My sales pitch was succinct, charming, and I had explained the washout I had had due to the ice storm. I got absolutely nowhere. Nothing.ziltch. Not even one call back. I was indeed running out of money and I had to leave the hotel. I repacked the car and I made the long lonely drive back to Danville. When I returned to work at the real estate office, the eyes of my secretary were saying: "So, how was MICROSOFT?" I simply said: "Sheridan, you are a remarkable human being and I am lucky to have you working for me. Let's talk about Bill Gates and MICROSOFT some other time. Right now, we have a lot of work to do. We have to earn a living. Oh, and here. This is a speeding ticket. It's gotta be paid. Please see that it's taken care of. I got the speeding ticket during my road trip to MICROSOFT just before it started snowing."

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Promotional pictures of High Tech Jackets available upon request.